DEMOCRATIC
GERMAN REPORT

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EAST GERMAN ATOM PLANS

The German Democratic Republic will soon be in a position to take an active part in the development of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, it was announced in Berlin on November 10th. The rapid development of the practical application of atomic energy for peaceful purposes in industry and medicine has been greatly aided in the German Democratic Republic by the delivery by the Soviet Union of an atomic reactor and a cyclotron.

The Government has now established a special "Scientific Commission for the Peaceful Use of Atomic Energy", headed by Professor Gustav Hertz, one of the world's leading atomic scientists, who has received the Nobel Prize, the Stalin Prize and the National Prize of the German Democratic Republic for his work in this field.

TALKS CLEAR AIR

The Geneva Conference of the Foreign Ministers of Britain, France, the USA and the USSR ended on November 16th without any agreement on European security and the German problem, or on the other points on the agenda.

The three weeks of discussion produced the following clear picture of the attitude of the western powers on the one hand, and of the Soviet Union on the other hand, towards European security and Germany.

The western attitude may be summarised as follows:

Germany should be reunited, remilitarised, and integrated in NATO, and Atlantic Pact troops, armed with atom cannon, should move eastwards to the German-Polish frontier. The representatives of Germany itself should not be consulted on the German problem.

The Soviet attitude may be summarised thus:

A European security pact should be concluded first, and both German states should be allowed to join this pact, thus providing a good basis for the unification of a pacific Germany. The representatives of both German states should join in discussions on Germany.

In the course of the conference Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov made repeated proposals for provisional, more limited, security arrangements in an attempt to reach agreement. He also proposed the immediate withdrawal of half the foreign troops stationed in East and West Germany in order to decrease tension.

On November 18th East German Prime Minister Grotewohl, commenting on the results of the conference, stated:

"We regret that it was not possible to reach agreement on European collective security in Geneva. This shows clearly that the western powers at this moment are not ready to give up their aim of integrating the whole of Germany in a unilateral military pact.

"However, the conference was not without results, since conditions in the world and in Germany have been clearly shown, and recognition of the situation makes it possible to adopt the right point of view."

Referring to the western rejection of the Soviet proposal that 50 % of all foreign troops should be withdrawn from Germany,

(continued on next page)

DELHI – CAIRO – BERLIN

The German Democratic Republic will cooperate with India and Egypt in the development of their industry, as a result of the recent journey to these countries of Heinrich Rau, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Internal and External Trade.

Reporting on his trip at a press conference in Berlin on November 18th, Heinrich Rau, emphasised that this help would be given on the basis of full respect for the independence and equal rights of these nations.

Assistance to India would be largely in the field of providing machinery and technical assistance for the development of India's huge soft coal reserves, Rau stated. A full development would take very many years, but it would create a completely new basis for Indian industry. The German Democratic Republic, with the largest soft coal production in Europe, has unrivalled experience in this field. In order to ensure direct contact with Indian government offices the trade delegation of the German Democratic Republic would move from Bombay to New Delhi, Rau announced.

Deputy Prime Minister Rau mentioned the extremely friendly atmosphere of his talks in New Delhi with Indian leaders including Prime Minister Nehru and other ministers. Prime Minister Nehru requested him to convey friendly greetings to Otto Grotewohl, Prime Minister of the German Democratic Republic.

In Cairo, where he was received by Prime Minister Nasser, Minister Rau was able to conclude a long term trade agreement, under which goods valued at least six million Egyptian pounds (slightly less than six million sterling) will be exchanged next year.

To facilitate the growing trade relations with Egypt, an Egyptian Trade Mission with consular rights will be permanently stationed in Berlin, and the existing Trade Mission of the German Democratic Republic in Cairo will be granted consular rights.

(cont. from front page)

TALKS CLEAR AIR

Prime Minister Grotewohl stated:

"The fact that the western powers rejected this proposal shows clearly that they have certain aims in Germany. But we must repeat, as we have been saying for years: 'Go home for good.' We are grown up enough to settle our own affairs in Germany. If occupation troops were withdrawn, and West Germany left NATO, there would immediately be a completely different situation in Germany."

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Below we give a day-by-day account of the negotiations on European security and the German problem at Geneva. The first part of this conference log appeared in GERMAN REPORT dated November 11th:

CONFERENCE LOG (2)

November 8th:

The foreign ministers resumed their negotiations after a three-day recess. Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov made the following points in a basic statement on the attitude of the Soviet Union to European security and the German problem:

1. The western plan submitted to the conference on October 28th would mean the remilitarisation of the whole of Germany, and the inclusion of the whole of Germany in the North Atlantic bloc directed against the Soviet Union. This plan is absolutely unacceptable to the Soviet Union.

2. No plan for German reunification can be put into effect without consulting the representatives of both existing German states; no plan for German reunification is acceptable if it would rob the people of the German Democratic Republic of their possession of the factories and the land.

3. The attitude of the Soviet Union towards the German problem has changed since the Berlin Foreign Ministers Conference in January 1954. At that time the Soviet Union was ready, under certain conditions, to agree to all-German elections. Since then, despite Soviet warnings, West Germany has joined NATO. Under these circumstances all-German elections are out of the question for the present.

Molotov reiterated that today the problem of German reunification could only be solved by bringing the two German states closer together, and he repeated his proposal of an All German Council for this purpose. (In view of the great importance of Molotov's statement, we print a very full summary of the text on page 172 of this issue.)

After this Soviet statement, US Foreign Minister Dulles announced that "in view of the serious implications" of Molotov's statement, the meeting would be adjourned for the western foreign ministers to consider the position.

November 9th:

US Foreign Minister Dulles said that the statement made by Molotov on the previous day "strikes a crippling blow at the possibility of developing relations of confidence with the Soviet Union". He claimed that acceptance of the Molotov proposals would "Sovietise the whole of Germany". Dulles said that the western proposals (to integrate a reunited and rearmed Germany in NATO) "embody greater assurances than have ever before been contrived to preserve the peace". He remarked favourably upon the fact that there had been considerable agreement between the two sides on European security, but said that Soviet rejection of German reunification on western terms was a grave breach of the agreement reached at Geneva by the heads of government.

Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov, in reply, stated that the directive of the four heads of government had laid down that the first point to be discussed was "European security and the German problem", and that in this phrase, European security was given first place. It was therefore the western foreign ministers who were acting against the directive, by trying to place the question of all-German elections first.

He repeated his arguments that European security could not be obtained by integrating the whole of a remilitarised Germany in NATO, a pact which was directed against the Soviet Union.

Turning to the question of all-German elections, he called once again for the representatives of both German states to be heard by the foreign ministers, since the question of elections was first and foremost a question for the German people themselves.

Molotov rejected the western allegation that he had proposed the "Sovietisation" of Germany. He had proposed the establishment of an All-German Council which should work to bring the two parts of Germany together, and that this work should not infringe the social systems at present ruling in both East and West Germany. "This shows quite clearly that there is no proposal for Sovietisation".

After further discussion, Molotov made a new proposal to aid the relaxation of tension in Europe. He proposed:

1. That the four powers should reduce by 50% the strength of their forces stationed in Germany, and reduce the total strength of their forces by the number of troops withdrawn from Germany.

2. That the two groups of states in Europe (NATO in the west and Warsaw Pact states in the east) should conclude a provisional non-aggression pact, to be eventually superseded by a broader pact on collective security in Europe.

Both the new proposals made by Molotov were ignored by the western foreign ministers. It was agreed to suspend discussions on European security and the German problem, and proceed to the consideration of other points on the agenda.

November 10th—14th:

The foreign ministers continued with their discussions on the other two points of the agenda — general disarmament, and east-west relations — without reaching any agreement.

November 15th:

Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov repeated his proposals for a fifty percent cut in foreign forces in Germany, and for a provisional east-west non-aggression pact in Europe, which had been ignored by the west-

ern foreign ministers in the negotiations on November 9th. The proposals were rejected by the western foreign ministers.

Molotov then proposed that the four powers should give official form to five principles on European security, on which the discussions had shown there was agreement between East and West. The principles were:

1. The four powers will renounce the use of force in Europe for the solution of conflicts.

2. The four powers will take joint measures against any aggressor in Europe.

3. The four powers will give no assistance to an aggressor.

4. A security zone should be formed between the East and West in Europe in which only strictly limited forces, under joint control, should be stationed.

5. The powers pledge themselves to consult together in case of conflicts.

The western powers also rejected this last minute bid to obtain even a very limited agreement between East and West. Dulles stated: "As long as Mr Molotov persists in his refusal to agree to discuss German reunification by means of free elections we are not prepared to consider fragmentary Soviet proposals."

November 16th:

The four foreign ministers made final speeches summing up the three weeks of the conference. The three western foreign ministers all stressed that in their opinion no agreement had been reached on the first point of the agenda because the Soviet Union had rejected their plan for the inclusion of the whole of a remilitarised Germany in NATO. None of the western ministers mentioned their repeated rejection of all Soviet proposals for security.

Molotov, in his summing-up, made the following points on European security and the German problem:

"We regret that although the western representatives spoke so much about the German problem, they were not even ready to listen to the opinions of representatives of the German people. The discussion on Germany was doomed to failure since it was held without representatives of West and East Germany.

"We are in favour of the restoration of German unity through free all-German elections, but we cannot give our support to plans aimed at the remilitarisation of the whole of Germany, and its integration in military groupings hostile to the USSR.

"Our discussions have shown that the solution of the German problem depends above all upon the Germans themselves. An All-German Council must be formed of the representatives of both German states so that they can finally begin to discuss all the questions which affect all Germans.

"Our discussion on European security and the German problem have not yet led to agreement, but we hope that this conference will prove to have been useful in this connection."

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The final communique of the conference, signed by all four foreign ministers, stated that discussions had taken place on the three points of the agenda, and that the continuation of the discussions would be settled through diplomatic channels.

WEST GERMAN VIEWS ON EAST-WEST CONTACTS

More and more people in West Germany are coming to see that Germans themselves from East and West must sit down together to attempt to solve the German problem. Here is a selection of comment from West German newspapers in the past few weeks:

"Some time the decision will be taken in Germany as to which social order is better. The East claims to have the better order, we deny this... What can prevent us from accepting the challenge of the East and sitting down together, with representatives elected freely here and not so freely there?... This is the decisive question, and we shall have to have such a confrontation if we want reunification."

"Mannheimer Morgen" November 12th

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"The west will have to make compromises... and one of these compromises will be that reunification cannot any more be regarded as an integration of the Soviet Zone in the Federal Republic, but can only be the coalescing of two states as equal negotiating partners . . . It will be unavoidable that Bonn and Pankow (West German propaganda name for East German Government, ed.) should come together, and establish joint organs for the ending of the partition... This apple is very sour, but Bonn will have to eat it."

Hermann Rauschning, former governor of Danzig, writing in the "Rheinisch-Westfälischen Nachrichten" on November 5th.

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"The Soviet proposal for an 'All-German Council' has placed this subject on the agenda of world policy. And how can we assist the growing together of the two German states, how can free elections be prepared, how can the unpolitical questions of trade, post and traffic be successfully solved if we promptly say no to this provisional proposal?... Many people do not see that the Germany policy of the allies is not always a German policy, and that the foreign policy of the Bonn Government is not always in the national interest... The West German delegation in Geneva nods in agreement when the West speaks; it shakes its head when the East speaks; and in its own cause it is dumb."

"Rheinisch-Westfälische Nachrichten" November 12th.

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"The question we have to face is: Do we feel strong enough to wage ideological warfare with Communism? If the answer is yes, then we should take every opportunity to come nearer to the other Germany. We should accept all-German committees to work on as many inner-German technical problems as possible."

"Die Rheinpfalz", November 10th.

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"In the long run it will be impossible to avoid having contact with Pankow. We therefore have to consider when the right moment has come to establish contact, not because we like Pankow, but because the road to reunification obviously leads via Pankow... We keep on emphasising that we feel far superior to the Soviet Zone regime, and that our political and economic system has automatic attractions for middle Germany (western propaganda name for German Democratic Republic, ed.). Why should we not rely on our superiority, and take the Pankow regime so heartily into our arms that it suffocates?"

"Pfälzer Tageblatt" November 12th.

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"Conversations between (West) German and Soviet Zonal members of parliament on concrete economic, technical and juridical questions would be completely harmless. The worst that could happen would be that they parted again without having achieved anything."

"Neue Rhein-Zeitung" November 12th.

SOLVING THE GERMAN PROBLEM

Molotov's Speech at Geneva on November 8th

At the previous meeting on Nov. 4, Mr. Dulles submitted on behalf of the delegations of the United States of America, Great Britain and France, proposals on the German question with regard to the holding of all-German elections. The Soviet delegation has carefully considered and examined these proposals and deems it necessary to state the following.

In Mr. Dulles' proposal it is said that it is submitted "in accordance with the plan presented by the three powers on Oct. 28." And this is confirmed by the entire contents of the said proposals.

Consequently, the proposal by the three delegations of Nov. 4 does not constitute anything new as compared to the proposals of Oct. 28. And the proposals of the three powers of Oct. 28 show that their aim is to implement the remilitarisation not only of Western Germany but also of Eastern Germany, and at the same time to draw not only Western Germany but also the whole of Germany into the North Atlantic bloc, directed against the Soviet Union, and not only the Soviet Union.

It need not be proved that the Soviet Union cannot sympathize with such an aim and by no means can it facilitate its attainment. The peoples of the Soviet Union know German militarism well enough not to facilitate its revival. They know that the revival of German militarism is incompatible with the maintenance of peace and with the security of European nations.

In the proposal submitted by Mr. Dulles it is said that it has been agreed with the Government of the German Federal Republic. It does not, however, take into account the point of view of the Government of the German Democratic Republic.

Whereas, in order to work out a really acceptable proposal on the unification of Germany, it is necessary to take into account the views not only of the German Federal Republic but also of the German Democratic Republic. The three delegations have not even attempted to take into consideration the recent statement by the Government of the German Democratic Republic.

The four powers have, no doubt, a certain responsibility for the settlement of the German question and are obliged to see that the reconstruction of life in Germany be carried out on a democratic and peaceful basis. At the same time it was always envisaged that the four powers will rely on the efforts of the German people themselves aimed at the attainment of this goal.

That was the position ten years ago when Germany had just accepted the unconditional surrender and when there were no German authorities on German soil which could assume the responsibility for Germany's destiny. Since then many years have elapsed and the situation in Germany has changed substantially. There are now two German states.

In September, 1949, there emerged the German Federal Republic which has adopted its own Constitution and which has formed its Parliament, Government, and other governmental bodies. This state, where big monopolies and Junkers have retained their rule, has concluded with the three powers—the United States of America, Great Britain and France—the Paris agreements and has joined the military groupings of the Western powers—the North Atlantic bloc and the Western European Union.

The Soviet Union disapproves of some aspects of the development of the German Federal Republic and is of the opinion that steps towards remilitarisation resulting from the Paris agreements constitute a threat to peace. Nevertheless, the Soviet Union, in the interests of consolidating peace, has decided to establish diplomatic relations with the German Federal Republic.

In October, 1949, another German state was formed in Eastern Germany — the German Democratic Republic — where the working masses—workers, peasants and intellectuals came to power—and where, at the same time, facilities are afforded for private enterprise.

The formation of the German Democratic Republic was a turning point in Germany's history and in that of Europe as a whole. The working masses in Germany have for the first time found in the German Democratic Republic their real fatherland — the German state where the working people themselves and not big monopolies and Junkers are masters of their country.

At the same time a really peaceloving German state has been created for the first time in Europe, a state which does not represent a threat to the other European states. This state, as is well known, has declared its readiness to participate in the creation of a system of collective security in Europe, and in the efforts to cooperate with the German Federal Republic in order to create the basis for the unification of Germany on a peaceful and democratic basis.

One cannot agree with the statement that pending the reunification of Germany it is allegedly impossible to ensure European security. The participation of both the German Democratic Republic and the German Federal Republic in a system of European security would be a great contribution to the cause of ensuring peaceful conditions of development for the nations of Europe.

The German Democratic Republic, like the German Federal Republic, has established diplomatic and trade relations with a whole series of states. The German Democratic Republic has the rights of a sovereign state, and has complete liberty to solve internal and external questions as it wishes. It is impossible to ignore or underestimate the existence of the German Democratic Republic with its population of eighteen million. Whether some people like it or not, the German Democratic Republic is firmly based and is developing successfully.

The German Democratic Republic and the U. S. S. R. have recently concluded a treaty based on the principles of full equality, of mutual respect for sovereignty and of non-interference in internal affairs. The parties to the treaty have set as their aim the maintenance and consolidation of peace and security in Europa and also the re-establishment of the unity of Germany as a peaceful and democratic state. The Soviet Union is developing its relations with the German Democratic Republic on the basis of this treaty, and it cannot and will not agree to the violation of the obligations under this treaty.

All this shows that the positions of the three powers in the German question are not of a constructive nature, that they are impracticable, for they do not reckon with the actual state of affairs.

Much has been said here with regard to the election system of the Western states, in regard to the fight among the parties for parliamentary seats. But in the elections of which Messrs. Dulles, Pinay and Macmillan have told us, the question, after all, is—whether the government will be replaced or whether it will remain in power for a new term. As is known, this change of government frequently takes place even without any elections.

The question of all-German elections is not merely a question of a change of government. Such elections in Germany would decide the destiny of the country, and the questions as to whether a united Germany shall develop as a peaceful democratic state or become a militaristic state and again be a menace to its neighbors.

The proposal is made here to accept the plan of all-German elections as a means of uniting Germany. On the one hand, this plan, as was shown previously, ignores the conditions actually existing in Germany, since the question of holding such elections has not ripened yet. On the other hand, even if we agreed to such an artificial plan, we could not put it into practice without the agreement of the Germans themselves living in the German Democratic Republic and the German Federal Republic. Finally, such a mechanical merger of the two parts of Germany by means of so-called "free elections" which would, moreover, be held, as it is provided for in the "Eden plan," in the presence of foreign troops, could lead to the infringement of the interests of the working masses of the German Democratic Republic, to which we cannot agree.

Naturally, there can be no consent to taking back from the working masses of the German Democratic Republic the plants and factories, land and natural resources. From this it is evident that an attempt to carry out the so-called "Eden plan" would involve serious complications inside Germany which none of us, of course, wishes to happen.

From this it follows that only full cognizance of the fact that there exist on the territory of Germany two different German states and that the reunification of Germany cannot be brought about other than by mutual agreement of these states can we help find the correct solution of the German question.

It is well known that in the relations between the two parts of Germany there is not the mutual confidence which is necessary for the reestablishment of Germany's unity. The representatives of one part of Germany, namely, of the German Federal Republic, do not even want to meet with the representatives of the other part of Germany, the German Democratic Republic.

In these circumstances the task of the four powers is to facilitate by all means the establishment of that confidence.

One should not assume that the Germans in East and West Germany are less interested in the unification of Germany than the Americans. French, British or Russians.

The ways to re-establish German unity on a peaceful and democratic basis can and should be found.

Such a way, in our opinion, would be the creation of an all-German council which could at the beginning coordinate the appropriate actions of the German Democratic Republic and the German Federal Republic in the field of political, economic and cultural life insofar as they affect all-German interests as well as actions concerning the strengthening of peace and security in Europe.

There are many common questions in the field of trade, movement between West and East Germany, etc., on which an agreed decision will be of advantage to all the Germans.

The representatives of the Western powers have not yet expressed their attitude to the proposal on the creation of an all-German council.

It should not be overlooked that this proposal takes into account existing conditions in Germany, and that its acceptance would lead to an approach and the creation of conditions for the reunification of Germany, without infringing on the interests of either of the two existing German states, or affecting the social system in the German Democratic Republic and the German Federal Republic.

As to the proposals which have been submitted here on behalf of the three Western powers, they in effect lead to the revival of an imperialist Germany; that is, to the extension of the Paris agreements to the whole of Germany and to the re-establishment throughout Germany of the rule of big monopolies, junkers and militarists, to the liquidation of democratic and social reforms and freedoms which were won by the working masses of the German Democratic Republic.

Mr. Dulles has stated here that the United States of America does not recognize the German Democratic Republic. But this does not change the actual state of affairs. The question of recognition is a question of time, and the German Democratic Republic being a state of German workers and peasants has a great future, since it follows the main line of development of the whole of humanity and has strong and true friends.

It was asserted here, in particular by Mr. Macmillan, that the Soviet Union has allegedly changed its position on the German question in comparison with the Berlin meeting of January, 1954, when the Soviet Government deemed it possible to agree to general elections in Germany. many.

It is true, at that time we considered it possible under certain conditions to agree to all all-German elections, but our proposals were disregarded. Since that time nearly two years have elapsed and the situation has considerably changed—the Paris agreements entered into force, Western Germany set itself against Eastern Germany and carried out many announced and not announced measures for remilitarization, joined military blocs, NATO included, and put itself under the joint military command of the Western powers' grouping. How can anyone disregard all that happened during these two years? How can anyone under these conditions speak of all-German elections?

It should be recalled that in the course of the discussion on the Paris agreements statements were made to the effect that after their ratification it would be possible to speak with the Soviet Union on the German question from a "position of strength". Now that the Paris agreements have been implemented, it is clear that attempts of such a kind cannot have any success either as regards the German question or any other question. One must also recall something else. We pointed out that the Paris agreements would be detrimental to the possibility of reuni'ing Germany and would raise unsurmountable obstacles. Nevertheless, no heed was taken.

Under the present conditions Germany cannot be reunified in the same way as it could have been before the Paris agreements.

The problem of German reunification can be solved at present only gradually, step by step, through bringing closer together the German Democratic Republic and the German Federal Republic and through their cooperation. The plans for the mechanical merger of the two parts of Germany met a negative attitude on the part of the Soviet Government as far back as the Four Power Conference since they were clearly inconsistent with the interests of peace and security in Europe and with the national interests of the German people. The position of the Soviet Union remains the same.

All this at the same time proves that the principal point in the proposal by the three powers is neither German reunification nor all-German elections. In their proposal both problems are subordinated to the major objective stated in their document of Oct. 26, which says that the treaty's "final stage would become effective when a reunified Germany decides to enter NATO and the Western European Union." Thus this plan is a means to remilitarize and include into the Western military groupings not only Western Germany but the whole of Germany.

All this convinces us that the proposals by the three Western powers on the German questions have nothing to do with insuring European security.

Such a Germany constitutes a danger for the European nations, whether it becomes a member of the military groupings of the Western powers or becomes itself an organizer of military groupings in Europe.

If the path for Germany to become a militarist state is not blocked, the danger of a new war will be infinitely greater.

The heads of government of the four powers have instructed us to consider European security and Germany. Proceeding from the main objective—to set up European security—we are instructed by the heads of our governments to consider various proposals directed towards the attainment of this objective, including first of all a security pact for Europe or for a part of Europe.

The heads of government in their directives for our conference have defined some important principles for the secur-Europe. Among these are:

A provision that states—parties to the pact—undertake not to resort to force and deny assistance to an aggressor.

Limitation, control and inspection in regard to armed forces and armaments.

The establishment between East and West of a zone in which disposition of armed forces will be subject to mutual agreement.

Some of these principles, as has already been stated here, are contained both in the proposals by the Soviet delegation on European security and in the proposals by the delegations of the three powers. In this case we cannot but state that on such basic questions as insuring European security on the basis of the liquidation of military groupings and the question of the German participation in the general system of European security we have not yet reached agreement.

Our proposals take into account the interests of European nations and national interests of the German people. They are based on due regard for the actual situation. They do not promise any easy solution of the complicated international problems and of the German question in particular, but such an easy solution unfortunately does not exist.

WHO SAID "NO" AT GENEVA?

On October 28th Molotov proposed an all-European collective security pact, to which the United States and both German states should adhere.

The western foreign ministers said "NO".

On October 31st Molotov proposed inviting the representatives of both parts of Germany to express their views on the German problem.

The western foreign ministers said "NO".

On October 31st Molotov proposed a limited security pact between the member states of Western European Union and the Warsaw Treaty, mutually rejecting aggression.

The western foreign ministers said "NO".

On October 31st Molotov proposed a "zone of limited armaments" including the whole of Germany, in which the armed forces of both sides should be strictly controlled.

The western foreign ministers said "NO".

On November 2nd Molotov proposed the formation of an All-German Council composed of East and West German representatives to bring the two parts of Germany together.

The western foreign ministers said "NO".

On November 2nd Molotov proposed withdrawal of all foreign troops from both parts of Germany, and agreement on the limitation of armed forces in the two German states.

The western foreign ministers said "NO".

On November 9th Molotov proposed a fifty percent cut in all foreign forces stationed in Germany.

The western foreign ministers said "NO".

On November 9th Molotov proposed a non-aggression pact between the two groups of states in Europe.

The western foreign ministers said "NO".

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Did Soviet foreign minister Molotov say "no"? Yes, twice: first on October 28th, when the western foreign ministers introduced a plan for foreign-controlled all-German elections leading to the integration of the whole of Germany into the NATO war pact; and second on November 4th, when the western foreign ministers introduced a plan of technical details for all-German elections which completely ignored the associated problem of European security.

You Ask — We Answer

"Comics" IN DEMOCRATIC GERMANY

"We are very much worried in Britain about comics, particularly the American-style ones. How does the German Democratic Republic deal with the problem?"

G. D., Sheffield

No American-style comics are published in East Germany, but parents and educators still have to face the problem, since huge quantities circulate in West Germany and West Berlin, and some get smuggled in here. Legal steps have now been taken to deal with this.

The relevant sections of the new East German law for the protection of young persons, passed on September 15th, are perhaps worth quoting in full:

"3 a. It is forbidden to print, introduce or distribute worthless or harmful literature in the form of text, pictures or other presentation in the German Democratic Republic.

3 b. Literature in this category includes anti-humanist writings, pictures and other items which have the purpose or the effect of encouraging particularly amongst young people a tendency to cruelty, contempt for humanity, racial hatred, murder, violence or other crimes, as well as to sexual excesses—literature injurious to a child's mental or moral development. Included in this category are also objects or writings which praise fascism or militarism.

3 c. Those responsible for their education are in duty bound to prevent such literature getting into their charges' hands. They must provide suitable progressive literature for children of all ages.

3 d. In schools, hostels, apprentices' schools, holiday camps, etc. the director must organise regular control inspections for the removal of undesirable literature.

3 e. The People's Police must also confiscate and destroy all worthless and harmful literature on sight. Those in possession of such literature are required to hand it over to the People's Police. No compensation is given for such material confiscated."

Anyone found responsible for producing, distributing or introducing such literature into East Germany, or of encouraging children to read it, is liable to 2 years' imprisonment and a fine. A punishment of 500 marks can be inflicted on an adult who keeps or stores worthless literature confiscated from children.

But it is not only necessary to prevent an influx of "bad" literature; children must have "good" books which satisfy their longing for excitement, relaxation and knowledge of interesting things about the past, about other countries, about new discoveries or about the future, such as Jules Verne gave us many years ago. Books must be cheap and available in large numbers in the free lending libraries.

The "Culture & Progress" and "New Life" companies have published long series of paper-backed spy, robber and adventure stories at 35 pfennigs each, for instance. There are stories of children in other countries, some translated from Russian, Chinese and other languages, and curious stories of science. Amongst these you find exciting titles like "Frost on the Palms", "The Green Ghost", "In the Catacombs of Tai Yuan", and even Oscar Wilde's "Canterville Ghost".

More expensive books range between 2.80 marks and about 6.50 marks. Amongst these are attractively produced books on technical subjects—birds, plants, fish, and a beautifully illustrated series on ships, wheeled vehicles, animals and so on through the ages. There are fairy tales and picture books for the very young, tales of adventure, science, and mystery for children of all ages. The proportion of translations is still very high, but there are some very popular East German writers — Lilo Hardel for the very young, Benno Pludra, who writes about life in the Republic, and Alex Wedding, who writes extremely charming and popular stories about life in New China and in the Far North.

There is one East German "comic" called "Atze", which contains adventures of the little Berliner "Atze", a picture story of "Treasure Island", funny animal stories, adventures on the moon and so on. Children's monthlies include "ABC" and "School Post", and newspapers include a weekly for Young Pioneers, and a daily, "Junge Welt" for the 14 to 18-year-olds.

There has been a great deal of discussion amongst writers and educators about what is meant by "good" books, and it is generally agreed that although many western adventure stories are quite unsuitable for translation, on account of their implied acceptance of colonialism, racial discrimination or aggressive tendencies, a number of other books could well be added to the list of those children's classics—"Tom Sawyer", "Robinson Crusoe", "Treasure Island", "The Last of the Mohicans", "The Jungle Book" and so on—which have already been published in East Germany.

ALL-GERMAN OLYMPIC TEAM

German sportsmen from both German states showed that they could cooperate on November 13th, when representatives of East and West meeting in Berlin agreed to send a joint German team to the 1956 Olympic Games.

At the meeting the representatives of the Olympic Committees of the German Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic reached full agreement on the principle that the outstanding sportsmen in every field should be selected for the joint team, irrespective of which part of Germany they came from.

A large part of the negotiations was taken up with important questions of detail, like the badge to be worn by the team, the National Anthem to be played in the case of victory, and similar subjects.

The West German representatives had at first suggested that the badge should include the eagle, symbol of the West German state; East German representatives said that this was unacceptable, since the eagle did not appear in the coat of arms of the German Democratic Republic. It was finally decided that the badge should consist of the black-red-gold flag, common to both German states, surmounted by the five Olympic rings.

On the vexed question of the anthem to be played in case of a victory, it was agreed that the West German anthem (Deutschland über alles) should be played in case of the victory of a West German athlete; the East German anthem (Auferstanden aus Ruinen) should be played in case of an East German victory; and in the case of a victory by a mixed team from East and West no anthem at all should be played.

In the question of the team uniform it was decided that the uniform for the winter sports at Cortina d'Ampezzo should be provided by West Germany for the entire team, and the uniform for the main events at Melbourne should be provided by East Germany.

News Items From Democratic Germany

The Zschopau hot springs sanatorium, which was destroyed during the war, has been restored by the East German social insurance service at a cost of 3.2 million marks, and will open in January 1956. The sanatorium has a capacity of 210 beds for the treatment of infantile paralysis and other spinal illnesses.

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Amongst the exhibitions to be seen in East Berlin this month were an East German Arts and Crafts exhibition, an exhibition of Japanese school children's drawings and paintings, one of the works of the 18th century French sculptor, Jean Antoine Houdon, and one of paintings and sketches by Jose Venturelli, contemporary Mexican artist.

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The Yugoslav chamber music orchestra of Radio Zagreb opened its tour of East Germany with a concert in East Berlin on November 18th. The orchestra came from Paris and will also perform in Austria, Holland and England.

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40,000 people saw the Dresden Hygiene Museum's "Glass Man" at the East German exhibition stand in the New Delhi Industrial Fair in October.

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The nationally owned chair factory in Oederan, East Germany, has set up the first completely mechanised production and assembly line in the East German furniture industry. A finished chair now comes off the assembly line every forty-five seconds.

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A burial ground with two male skeletons and a woman's grave from the Iron Age, (about 500 BC), and graves of the early Iron Age, (about 800 BC), have been dug out in Hildburghausen, East Germany. The finds are being treated by the Institute for Pre-historic Research of Jena University and will then be shown in the Eisfeld Museum. They represent the first reliable evidences of burial burnings and other burial customs in south-west Thuringia at that period.

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By 1960 about six hundred miles of railway will be electrified in East Germany. Electric trains have been running on the first stretch, the Halle-Koethen line, since the beginning of September.

FIRST WEHRMACHT GENERALS SWORN IN

The first two generals of the new West German Wehrmacht were sworn in, together with one hundred other officers, all of them veterans of the Hitlerite Wehrmacht, in the West German capital of Bonn on November 12th.

The hall of the Defence Ministry, in which the ceremony was held, was decorated with a huge Iron Cross, symbol of the German armies which in the First and Second World Wars brought such misery to Europe.

The two generals sworn in were Adolf Heusinger and Hans Speidel. Here are their records:

General Adolf Heusinger. Professional officer. Chief of operations on Hitler's general staff. After the war he publicly blamed Hitler for not wiping out the British Army at Dunkirk. Giving evidence at the Nuremberg Trial of major war criminals in 1946 he stated that he had been fully informed of the nazi slaughter of Jews and Slavs, but claimed he had opposed this slaughter, not because of any moral objections but because he "regarded these cruel methods as a military foolishness, since they unnecessarily hampered the fight of our troops against the enemy."

General Hans Speidel: Professional officer, who played a large part in the illegal rearmament of Germany in the pre-Hitler period. In 1940 appointed chief of staff of the nazi military command in occupied France. Later transferred to Eastern Front as general staff officer of Wehrmacht Army Group "B" which was responsible for the destruction of hundreds of towns and villages, and the murder of many thousands of civilians in the Ukraine. Brother of General Wilhelm Speidel, nazi military governor of Greece, sentenced by an American court to 20 years imprisonment for war crimes but released in 1951.

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Two thirds of all officers of the new West German Wehrmacht will be veterans of the nazi army, it was semi-officially announced in Bonn on November 3rd. The non-veterans will only be accepted in the lower ranks, and all senior officers without exception will be veterans. All officers from the old Wehrmacht will be reappointed in the ranks to which they were promoted by Hitler, or one step further up the ladder of promotion.

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It was announced in Bonn early in November that the whole of the West German Frontier Guard force would be integrated in the new West German Wehrmacht. When the Frontier Guard was first raised six years ago, West German spokesmen claimed that it was "purely a police force" and had nothing in common with the cadre force of a new army.

West German Communists Urge Quashing of Case

The West German Communist Party asked the Constitutional Court to quash as unconstitutional government attempts to ban the party.

Proceedings against the Communist Party have been dragging on since November 1951, when the West German Government first asked the Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe to ban the party on the grounds that it is "undemocratic". After long preparation court proceedings opened in November 1954 and continued until July this year. Since then the court has been considering its verdict.

In its new attempt to get the proceedings quashed, the Communist Party points out that the West German Constitution calls for reunification of the country, and states that this aim would be greatly hindered by the banning of the Party.

94% FOR STRIKE

Ninety-four percent of all metal workers in North Rhine Westphalia, West Germany, have voted in favour of strike action if employers do not agree to wage increases averaging 12% to meet the steadily rising cost of living. So far employers have only offered increases about half as high as those demanded.

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BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

A number of readers have asked for information about "Youth Dedication" ceremonies which they have heard are now being held in the German Democratic Republic. There have been various references to the question of "youth dedication" in the millionaire press recently, generally with the implication that this is some sort of "Red anti-religious ceremony", and since there seems to be some confusion on the subject, it may be worth treating at length.

First of all, it should be stated that this is not a horrid modern Communist invention. Fifty or more years ago, German Social Democrats launched the idea of non-religious dedication ceremonies, to form some sort of counter-balance to the Christian confirmation ceremonies, which were more important in Germany than in Britain and America, for instance.

Popular

The Social Democratic innovation became quite popular, and youth courses for school-leavers, culminating in dedication ceremonies, are still held througout West Germany by Social Democrats. The courses can be roughly compared to the old Socialist Sunday Schools in Britain.

The youth dedication course in the German Democratic Republic, which derives to some degree from the old Socialist tradition, consists of a series of ten lectures or discussions, and a whole series of visits to museums, theatres, factories, and so on. Boys and girls of fourteen, due to leave elementary school, are encouraged to join the courses, which are held outside school time. The whole thing is quite voluntary, as can be clearly seen from the fact that last year well over half the school leavers did not take part in the courses.

What do the children learn in these courses? I have before me the programme prepared for course leaders, so let us have a look at it. The first two lectures and discussions deal with the universe and the development of life on our planet. Then the boys and girls are shown how man conquered nature, how modern industry arose, and how society works today.

One whole period is devoted to the importance of the family in society, and the question of full equal rights in society for women. A lot of attention in given to the fight against fascism and against racialism, and one of the final lectures deals with the importance of the arts.

Films

All these lectures can be illustrated with films and lantern slides which are made available to the study groups, and books suggested for further reading include "A History of Tools" by Gordon-Childe, a volume by William Beebe on his discoveries in the depths of the ocean, and Jules Verne's "Journey to the Centre of the Earth". Films to be shown include the fine American trade union film "Salt of the Earth".

The pledge which the boys and girls take at the conclusion of the course should perhaps be quoted in full. It runs as follows:

"Are you ready to devote all your strength for a happy life for the working people, and for progress in economy, science and art?"

"We promise."

"Are you ready to devote all your strength for a united, peace-loving, democratic and independent Germany?"

"We promise."

"Are you ready to live in the spirit of friendship between the nations, and to devote all your strength, together with all peace-loving people, to defending peace to the utmost?"

"We promise."

One might think that nobody except the sort of obscurantists who launched the famous "Monkey Trial" at Dayton, Tennessee in the 1920's could be opposed to this civics course and the pledge which concludes it, but unfortunately both the Protestant and Catholic church authorities in East Germany have attempted to interfere with it. Clergy of both denominations have threatened that children will not be allowed to take part in confirmation courses, or to receive the rites of the church, if they participate.

Various clergy have criticised in particular the first lectures in the series, dealing with the universe and the origin of life. I happen to have been educated at two Quaker schools in England, Saffron Walden and Bootham, and after looking carefully through the plan for these lectures I must say I have not been able to discover anything which I did not learn at school.

War Blarney

A Dublin reader has sent me a cutting from the "Irish Press" which I think deserves a comment. The article, by a certain Benedict Kiely, deals with East Berlin. Most of it is unworthy of comment, since it is simply a re-hash of the tired old silly stories: "No children played spontaneously anywhere ... in East Berlin" is a fair sample of the nonsense.

But one sentence must be commented on. Mr.Kiely describes a visit to a bookshop in East Berlin:

"In a silent, too-silent, too-orderly bookshop ... the highest shelves were ornamented, God help us, with the heads of politicians; **it would be worth a war to prove that the heads of politicians have no place on bookshelves."**

What the name of God has to do in that incredible sentence I cannot imagine. I wanted to comment on the sentence: but I find that words literally fail me. I must leave it up to my readers.

For the record, I should like to be able to say on which date this article appeared, but the date is not noted on the clipping. From internal evidence in neighbouring articles it appears to have been September 21st. But this is a good opportunity to remind readers that if they send in a clipping, the name of the paper and the date should be clearly marked. We cannot read all the papers here, so please send us cuttings which you find worthy of comment; and please send them in promptly.

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